

The mission of the Utah Paraprofessional Consortium is to promote training and support for paraprofessionals leading to improved outcomes for children, youth and families.

Paraprofessional Consortium

May 5th, 2004

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

**SLCC Larry Miller Campus – Professional Development
Building
Minutes**

Attendance

Marilyn Likins, Peggy Dooling-Baker, Connie Nink, Pat Ault, Deanna Avis, Carol Harrington, Elizabeth Jensen, Sharon Grey, Ronda Menlove, Bob Morgan, Peggy Fratto, Bruce Schroeder, Larry Abplanalp, Diana Fillmore, Beth Rodriguz, Ginny Wimmer, Linda Alsop, Michele Friz and Mary Baldwin

Peggy Dooling-Baker welcomed everyone and opened the meeting welcomed every one. Introductions were made and Peggy reviewed today's meeting agenda.

PARAgraph Update – Carol Harrington

Carol Harrington stated that funds have been secured for the last issue of the PARAgraph and she will be meeting with Bruce Schroeder regarding the funding issue. If anyone is interested in submitting an article, please contact Carol.

DATC Para Program Update – Michele Friz

Michele Friz is the Paraeducator Program Instructor for the Davis Applied Technology College updated and highlighted the paraeducator program being offered through the Davis Applied Technology College. This program prepares individuals to work in schools as Paraeducators.

Michele stated that standards were based on the standards from the paraprofessionals book: The Instructional Strategies and Assessment Manual. During the externship, students have an opportunity to work with children in a school setting with Davis School District. The articulation and credit for this program are open entry and open exit which means student may enroll at any time and work at their own pace.

Student register and pay fee from credit hours to seat hours. 675 total course hours is about 20 credits but does not transfer. An ATC certificate has been approved through the board of regents through the state. For completion of certificate they need to take all of the core course. Michele highlighted the various core course. Course includes: computer literacy, workplace relations, job seeking skills, math I, introduction to education, positive learning environments, how children learn and grow, safety and first aid in schools, communication, instructional strategies, reading instruction, diversity in education and externship. She stated that down the road, electives such as preschool, more on reading/math instruction, special education, etc. will be provided.

Larry Abplanalp asked if they would be willing to train outside of DATC and Michele stated that students have to go on campus to acquire credit at this time.

Full tuition is full time (6 hours per day 5 days a week.) If the program grows, they will add more instructors or a teacher assistant.

Carol Harrington stated that SLCC will be providing an article and it would be nice if DATC provide an article letting paras know what is available. It would also be helpful to provide this information on the web site to alert people what these programs are designed for to be able to meet their needs. Ronda Menlove suggested a matrix table would provide the information that is needed.

The University of Phoenix has agreed along with SLCC to accept accreditation from DATC. It does not provide a 2-year certificate. It will help with the portfolio line of evidence and the state ParaPro.

SLCC Standard-Based Program at the Skill Center John Latkiewicz

John stated that the faculty of the pre-teacher education program are proposing to move the four para-education courses into pre-teacher education program and create a paraeducator track with that program. The courses would become elective with the pre-teacher education program. The Skills Center is proposing to operate those para-education coursework on a competency-based, open-entry/open-exit basis as either a parallel effort or as an alternative effort.

The Skills Center offers non-credit education and training although the college is working to establish bridges between the Skills Center's non-credit training and its credit program. John stated the Skills Center focuses on the disadvantaged population (single family.) He stated they work very close with the students at the skill center and the idea is to

evaluate our students at an individualized pace. The program offers the same quality and competency based as a credited program. The differences with the Skills Center program it is a non-credit program. John stated that at the moment we have a non-credit program but would like to ducktail with credit programs. We do not want our students to be at a disadvantage, but would like them to be able to flow right into an accreditation program at universities.

A discussion followed as whom would qualify, i.e., unskilled mothers, people who are looking to improve their skills, not necessarily a degree. Pat Ault stated that she would be working with John to ensure that the highly qualified be able to work it into credit or non-credit to go on to pursue a career.

Larry stated there are many options for Paraeducators, the Parapro, districts having their own assessment, portfolio, etc. Para want to be as good as they can be but many do not have the funds - in the end, they want to be highly qualified. After January 2002 Title I paras have to be highly qualified, how do we facilitate people to be highly qualified and pursue their goals if they want a degree. Paras would like to go at their own pace to achieve the skills. The associate degree would make paras highly qualified. Many paras are highly qualified in practice but not on paper. Marilyn stated that paraeducator need to have choices, be flexible, know they count for something and be able to move forward to become highly qualified. Carol stated The 12 hours does not count for credit and is a huge barrier but they could go the portfolio route. The discussion ended with a committee facilitating a conversation with higher education for transferring accreditation to universities through the skill center and DATC.

Web-Based Associate Program - Bob Morgan and Ronda Menlove

Ronda stated that a four year degree is required at USU, but have various programs at different sites that have a 2-year associate degree. We need a paraeducator degree that would be a step toward a bachelor degree. We have been working with early childhood degree and now will be working towards a paraeducator degree. It will be center based at our sites not on campus and will be designing and implementing a web-based component for Paraeducators. Ronda stated the program is in the embryonic stage and when paras receive an associate degree, they will be able to move onto a 4-year degree if they desire. We want a program where paras can do it on their time meeting with a local interactive study group on a regular bases.

Bob stated that at the embryonic stage we looked nationally and found 16 program looking at competencies. Twelve were on-line and looked at the courses they offered and looked at what they are doing cross referencing

with CEC which was virtually the same, What filtered was a set of courses that we feel comfortable with and will articulate a associate degrees and even a 4 year degrees. Articulation will be difficult and local logistic is a problem. We need to make it work right with on-line web-based. The program is hoping to produce highly qualified people, they will have web assignments with chats, not live audio, local groups will be highly interactive and will have a mentor (a mentor could be a district office person or a person in the building) and instructor working together. It will not be a cheap model. A local group for paraeducators is important to be able to get corrective feedback. Bob stated they Need to get information out their rural areas. Will have conference calls, online communication (emails). The human resources is already out there and will be of service to the programs. There will be practicum available. Marilyn stated we need to be clear of the outcomes, costs for these paras and flexibility. If we are straightforward I think we be amazed at how many would sign-up for the programs.

It was suggested that the PARAGraph have an article ont funding that is available. It is important that paras know about financial aide.

SLCC Advisory Board Discussion – Pat Ault

Pat deferred this items to the next meeting. Peggy stated at last meeting several committee members volunteered for the PAC. They included: Carol Harrington, Ginny Wimmer, Deanna Avis and Elizabeth Jensen. If anyone else is interested, please get with Pat.

Other Items

The Standards Committee met and will be on the agenda in June.

An Articulation committee will be formed to bring universities to the table and talk about the various programs now available. The committee members include: Marilyn Likins, Pat Ault, Michele Friz, Carol Harrington, Linda Alsop, Beth Rodriguez, Bob Morgan, Ronda Menlove, John Latkiewicz, Gerry Bolin, and Betty Ashbaker.

Marilyn announced the National Para Conference will be held in SLC at the Little America on April 21st, 22nd, and 23rd, 2005.

Summer Meeting Dates

June 24th at 1:00 – 3:00

Somewhere on Campus Larry Miller.

Continue to evlolve and have input from the universities.

